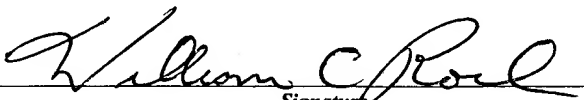



AF/2153\$

TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF (Large Entity)			Docket No. 12990
In Re Application Of: Heiko Ludwig, et al.			
Serial No. 09/433,427	Filing Date 11/4/1999	Examiner Kevin S. Parton	Group Art Unit 2153
Invention: METHOD OF CONNECTING COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER NETWORK			<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> RECEIVED OCT 01 2003 Technology Center 2100 </div>
<u>TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:</u> Transmitted herewith in triplicate is the Appeal Brief in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on The fee for filing this Appeal Brief is: \$320.00 <input type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of the fee is enclosed. <input type="checkbox"/> The Director has already been authorized to charge fees in this application to a Deposit Account. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0510/IBM			
 <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Signature</div>		Dated: <u>September 24, 2003</u>	
William C. Roch Registration No. 24,972 SCULLY, SCOTT, MURPHY & PRESSER 400 Garden City Plaza Garden City, New York 11530 (516) 742-4343		I certify that this document and fee is being deposited on <u>9/24/2003</u> with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail under 37 C.F.R. 1.8 and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.  <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Signature of Person Mailing Correspondence</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> William C. Roch <div style="font-size: x-small;">Typed or Printed Name of Person Mailing Correspondence</div> </div>	
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Heiko H. Ludwig, et al.

Examiner: Kevin S. Parton

Serial No: 09/433,427

Art Unit: 2153

Filed: November 4, 1999

Docket: CH919980043 (12990)

For METHOD OF INTERCONNECTING
COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER NETWORK

Dated: September 24, 2003

Commissioner For Patents
P.O. Box 1450
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BRIEF ON APPEAL

Sir:

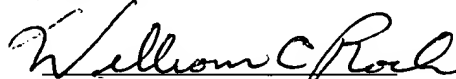
This is a BRIEF ON APPEAL in support of applicant's appeal from the Examiner's decision dated April 24, 2003 finally rejecting claims 1-18. This BRIEF ON APPEAL is arranged in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.192(c), with subheadings and the numbers of the subheadings in conformance therewith.

Claims 1-18 are set forth in APPENDIX A attached hereto, as specified by 37 C.F.R. §1.192(c)(9).

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner For Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on September 24, 2003.

Dated: September 24, 2003


William C. Roch

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1. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is the assignee International Business Machines Corporation.

2. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

No related appeals or interferences are known to the appellant, or the appellant's legal representatives, which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

3. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this patent application, and are involved in this appeal.

4. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No AMENDMENTS have been filed subsequent to the Final Rejection.

5. SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally relates to a method of interconnecting at least two server computers, generally pertaining to differing corporate entities; each server being connected with a least one client computer and including, or having access to, a workflow control application. (P (page) 1, L (lines) 6-12)

Workflow control applications are well known in the art and operate with different media. Typical electronic workflow control applications (also termed Workflow Management System or WfMSs) are available commercially in various types and from various sources, e.g. in the form of specialized systems, such as "MQ Series Workflow[®]" from IBM or "TeamFlow[®]" from ICL, or as parts of so-called Enterprise Resource Planning Systems, such as R3[®] by SAP and Baan[®] by the Baan Company. (P 1, L 16-24)

Today's systems of this type do not distinguish between an external view of a process that is visible outside the organization and its internal details. Their interfaces are generally aimed at the internal user. This is a problem if one organization (provider corporation) wants to perform a process on behalf of another (requestor corporation) so that it can be initiated and accessed by the requestor corporation through an automated interface and, vice versa, so that results generated by the provider can be reported back to the requestor. (P 1, L 26-P 2, L 4)

This issue gains importance; specifically, an increasing need to outsource non-core business leads to increased service activity between separate companies. However, business organizations do not normally want to make internal information available to business partners nor do they wish to restrict their ability to conduct business internally. If separate organizations enter into a business relation, they will normally conclude an agreement or contract defining the circumstances under which the requestor corporation might initiate a process in the provider corporation and exchange further information when performing the process. As used herein, the term "contract" is a description of mutual obligations in the form of a protocol. (P 2, L 16-19)

The use of server computers running a workflow control application in one and the same organization has been an issue for some time. Organizations want to deploy more than one server to balance workloads or to provide service at different sites that are connected by low bandwidth or only intermittently. If several servers are used, process templates have to be distributed as well as states and data of processes and activities. The various distributed parts have to be kept consistent. This problem has been discussed and described in the art; some solutions have been implemented in commercial products, such as IBM's MQ Series Workflow[®] mentioned above. (P 2, L 21-32)

For the purpose of this specification, the terms "server" and "server computer" are used synonymously and refer to an electronic computer which functions as a "host" computer and is capable of being operatively connected with one or more "clients" (short for

"client computer"). The connection of a server and at least one client results in a "net" (short for interconnected electronic computers). (P 3, L 1-8)

A related issue is interoperability between workflow control applications of different vendors. Grown computer infrastructures tend to be heterogenous. This is a problem of providing standard interfaces to workflow control applications for server-to-server communication. Various attempts have been made at defining such an interface, e.g. by the 'Workflow Management Coalition', (a consortium of workflow control application vendors and users) which has created an interface called Interface 4 (cf. Technical Report WfMC-TC-1013, edited by the Workflow Management Coalition (1995), Hampshire, England The term "interface" is used to refer to a physical or virtual means capable of causing operative interconnection connection of physical and/or virtual entities. (P 3, L 10-24)

These known interfaces help to cross vendor boundaries but do not cross corporate limits. Notably, such issues as privacy, flexibility and independence are not addressed because the relationship between internal (i.e. inter-corporate) and external (i.e. intra-corporate) interfaces is not a subject of such interfaces. (P 3, L 26-31)

Agreements and contracts are known per se in various fields of transactions, workflow management, and distributed systems in general: A first prior art contract approach (cf. Wächter, H. Et al; "The ConTract Model", in Elmagarmid, A.K. (ed.) *Database Transaction Models for Advanced Applications*, San Mateo 1991) enables a performance of long-lived transactions of the type that can be perceived as processes, by committing, at an early stage, those parts of a transaction for which compensation mechanisms have been agreed upon. (P 4, L 19-28)

The present invention is concerned with combining a contract approach with what is called a virtual enterprise co-ordinator (also termed VEC for short herein) explained in more detail below and developed to enrich such agreements by expressions for failure-responsibility of a process and to supervise these enriched agreements in the connector

application having the function of a gateway. However, none of these approaches addresses terminology issues. (P 5, L 16-24)

The present invention is directed to an improved method for interconnecting at least two server computers of different corporations, each of which is connected with at least one client computer, and wherein each server runs a workflow control application which may, but need not, be the same, and to solve the terminology problem to guard privacy and independence of operation. (P 5, L 26-P6, L 2)

A first embodiment the invention provides a method of interconnecting a first server computer of a service requestor and a second server computer of a service provider, each of said first server computer and said second server computer being connected to at least one client computer said first server computer running a first workflow management system application, and said second server computer running a second workflow management system application, said method comprising providing a first and a second connector application for permitting said first server computer access to a copy of said first connector application and for permitting said second server computer access to a copy of said second connector application, wherein said copies of said first and said second connector application each comprises a connection agreement for a first work task of a first workflow instance encompassed by said first workflow management system application which copy of said first connector application further comprises a first mapping table including a first service terminology and a common terminology, and which copy of said second connector application further comprises a second mapping table including a second service terminology and said common terminology, said first work task being transposed by said first mapping table from said first service terminology into an input data set in said common terminology, said input data set being marshalled to said second server computer over a common connection, and said marshalled input data set being transposed to a second work task by said second mapping table from said common terminology into said second service terminology, and said second work task being processed by said workflow management system application. (P 6, L 27-P7, L28)

A second embodiment of the invention provides a computer network comprising a first server computer of a service requestor and a second server computer of a service provider, each of said first server computer and said second server computer being connected to at least one client computer, said first server computer running a first workflow management system application, and said second server computer running a second workflow management system application, said first and second server computer being interconnected by means of a first and a second connector application arranged in such a manner that said first server computer having access to a copy of said first connector application and said second server computer having access to a copy of said second connector application, wherein said first and said second connector application each comprises a connection agreement for a first work task of a first workflow instance encompassed by said first workflow management system application, which copy of said first connector application further comprises a first mapping table including a first service terminology and a common terminology, and which copy of said second connector application further comprises a second mapping table including a second service terminology and said common terminology said first work task being transposed by said first mapping table from said first service terminology into an input data set in said common terminology, said input data set being marshalled to said second server computer over a common connection, and said marshalled input data set being transposed to a second work task by said second mapping table from said common terminology into said second service terminology, and said second work task being processed by said second workflow management system application. (P 7, L 30-P 8, L 31)

According to a preferred embodiment, the results of the second work task of the second workflow management system application are transposed by the second mapping table from the second service terminology into an output data set in the common terminology, wherein the mapped output data set is marshalled to the first server computer over the common connection, and the marshalled output data are transposed by the first mapping table from said common terminology into said first service terminology. (P 9, L 1-9)

According to another preferred embodiment, the first and second connector applications reside in a first and second access device of the service requestor and the service provider, wherein each access device comprises an access computer including the connector applications. (P 9, L 11-15)

In a further preferred embodiment of the invention, the connector applications reside in the server computers of the service requestor and the service provider. (P 9, L 17-19)

According to another preferred embodiment the connector applications reside in the client computers, which are connected to the service requestor server computer and to the service provider server computer. (P 9, L 21-24)

The following description references Fig.1. The service requestor organization 1 has service requestor server computer 112 with a workflow management system application (WfMS) 3 and one variant of an Access Device: 5 the Service Requestor's Access Device. The service provider 2 has service provider server computer 122 with a WfMS 4 and the other variant of an Access Device: 6 the Service Provider's Access Device. (P 9, L 26-P 10, L 2)

Before a work task of a service requestor 1 can be outsourced to a service provider, several operations must be completed:

- an accord between a service requestor and a service provider must be established either verbally in written form or by some other means,
- a workflow template must be established in the service requestor's WfMS 3 with one of the workflow's sub-tasks representing a work task 7 to be outsourced,
- a workflow template 15 must be established in the service provider's WfMS 4 to represent the processing of the whole outsourced work task 7,
- a connection agreement must be created and a copy is stored in the service requestor's Access Device at 8 and the service provider's Access Device at 12,

-mapping tables 9 and 13 describing how to map data items described in the workflow templates to data items described in the connection agreement are created and stored in the service requestor's Access Device 5 at 9 and the service provider's Access Device 6 at 13. (P 10, L 4-26)

Once the above criteria have been established, the system is capable of outsourcing tasks. The following text is an overview of successfully processing a single outsourcing task using a previously established connection agreement 8 and 12 as described above. The device allows many instances of such a process using the same or different connection agreements to run concurrently. (P 10, L 28-P 11, L 3)

A workflow instance 18 of a workflow template is created. Using a workflow interface 11 provided by the WfMS 3 the service requestor's Access Device 5 detects when the workflow reaches a point where it is appropriate to request the service provider to perform the outsourced work task 7. The correct connection agreement 8 is located, this indicates the details of the service provider 2 and the relevant data mapping table 9. According to this, information data is retrieved from the workflow instance 18 and marshalled into a format that can be interpreted by the service provider's Access Device; this is termed the input data ip1, ip2 (see also Fig.2). The request to start the outsourced task together with said input ip1, ip2 is passed across a computer network 17 to the service provider's Access Device 6. On receiving the request the service provider's Access Device locates it's copy of the connection agreement 12; this indicates the mapping table 13 to use to marshal the input data and the name of a workflow template 15 for the outsourced task. The service provider's Access Device marshals the input data into the form defined in the workflow template using the mapping table 13. The service provider's Access Device then starts a new workflow instance 19 of the workflow template 15 using the WfMS workflow client computer interface 16. A connection record 14 is created and stored in persistent memory. (P 11, L 5-31)

The service provider's Access Device 6 detects the completion of the workflow instance 19 using the workflow client computer interface 16 to the WfMS 4; the completion

code and any output data of the workflow instance is retrieved. The connection record 14 is used to retrieve the mapping table 13 that is in turn used to marshal the data into the format that can be interpreted by the service requestor's Access Device 5, this is said to be the output data op1, op2. Said output data op1, op2 is then sent to the service requestor's Access Device across the computer network 17. The connection record 14 is removed from the system. On receiving the notification from the service provider's Access Device the service requestor's Access Device 5 retrieves the respective connection record 10. The connection record allows the correct mapping table 9 to be retrieved and used to translate the output data into the format define by the workflow template 7. The completion of the outsourced task is signalled and said translated data is passed to the WfMS 3 using the workflow client computer interface 11. (P 12, L 1-21)

The mapping tables 9 and 13 for the purposes of this invention are described in more detail with reference to Fig. 2: (P 12, L 23-25)

The mapping table 9 of the service requestor maps the work task 7 from a first service terminology 9a into common terminology 9b. The result of this mapping are the input data ip1 and ip2, which are marshalled over the connection 17 to the mapping table 13 of the service provider. The mapping table 13 of the service provider maps the input data ip1, ip2 from the common terminology 13b to the second service terminology 13a for the work task 15 of the service provider. The result wo1, wo2 of the work task 15 of the service provider is mapped by the mapping table 13 of the service provider from the second service terminology 13a to common terminology 13b. This mapped result comprises the output data op1, op2 which are marshalled to the mapping table 9 of the service requestor. This mapping table 9 maps the output data op1, op2 from common terminology 9b to the first service terminology 9a, which output data serve as a result of the outsourced work task 7. (P 12, L 27-P 13, L12)

The inventions as described above allows the service requestor and the service provider to save privacy, flexibility and independence as follows: (P 13, L 14-16)

Privacy: All communication from a process or sub-process to the outside or vice versa is sent through and controlled by the connection applications. No direct interaction between workflow control application of different organizations takes place. No information will be exchanged beyond what has been specifically defined in the agreement according to which the process and sub-process are connected. (P 13, L 18-25)

Flexibility: By mapping the common view of a sub-process onto the respective internal representations, both organizations are free to modify on both individual and template level. However, an internal modification might entail the requirement for an organization to also change its mapping. (P 13, L 27-32)

Independence: The gateway also protect co-operating processes in one organizations to be affected by internal changes to the process in the other as long as the modifying party carefully adapts the mapping and leaves its external interface unchanged. (P 14, L 1-5)

6. CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

Whether claims 1-18 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Bittinger et al (U.S. 5,754,774) in view of Skeen et al. (U.S. 5,557,798), and Khan et al (U.S. 6,157,934).

7. GROUPING OF CLAIMS

This patent application has set of method claims 1-9 and a substantially parallel set of computer network claims 10-18 which are considered to set forth parallel issues, except if the Board decides to disregard any particular limitations as being improper method claim limitations or improper system claim limitations, in which case the Board if requested to

consider both a method claim and a system claim, if one claim is considered to distinguish over the prior art while the other claim is not considered to distinguish over the prior art, in which case the claims do not stand or fall together.

8. APPELLANT'S ARGUMENTS WITH RESPECT TO EACH OF THE ISSUES ON APPEAL

Reversal is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Bittinger, et al. (U.S.P. 5,754,774) in view of Skeen, et al. (U.S.P. 5,557,798) and Khan, et al. (U.S.P. 6,157,934) for the following reasons.

Bittinger et al.

The primary reference Bittinger et al. (US 5,754,774) does not relate specifically to workflow management systems at all. Instead, Bittinger et al. employs the World Wide Web while using existing communication protocols and languages in a low speed communication system without requiring any modifications to existing web browsers or web servers. Bittinger et al. increases the performance of a web browser of a first computer which then communicates, using the Hyper-Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP), with a web server of a second computer. An HTTP data stream corresponding to a communication originated by the web browser of the first computer is intercepted prior to transmission of the HTTP data stream over the external communication link to the web server of the second computer. The intercepted HTTP data stream is converted from the HTTP protocol to a client/server specific

communication protocol, and the converted client /server specific data stream is then transmitted to the second computer. The second computer converts the client/server specific data stream to the original HTTP data stream which is then provided to the web server of the second computer.

Thus, Bittinger, et al. provides a general communication system not specifically related to workflow management applications as explained in the present BRIEF ON APPEAL on pages 4-7.

Pages 5 and 6 of the Final Rejection acknowledge that Bittinger et al. fails to disclose a workflow management application in which a first server computer runs a first workflow management system application wherein a first work task is part of a first workflow instance, and a second server computer runs a second workflow management system application. Further wherein a first connector application comprises a first mapping table including a first service terminology and a common terminology, and a copy of a second connector application comprises a second mapping table including a second service terminology and the common terminology. Further wherein the first work task is transposed by the first mapping table, and the marshaled input data is transposed to a second work task by the second mapping table from the common terminology, such that the marshaled input data is processed by the second workflow management system.

The rejection then attempts to reconstruct these and other features of the

present invention which provides an interconnect of a first workflow management system and a second workflow management system by relying upon Skeen et al. and Khan et al.

Skeen et al.

Skeen et al. is also not related specifically to workflow management systems and applications, and instead relates generally to (Summary of the Invention) a communication interface for decoupling one software application from a second software application to allow communications between the different software applications. The communication interface is comprised of first and second libraries of programs. A first data exchange library manages self-describing forms which contain actual data to be exchanged as well as type information regarding data format and class definition. A second communications library manages communications, and includes a subject mapper to receive subscription requests regarding a particular subject and maps them to particular communication disciplines and to particular services supplying this information.

The functions of the interface are carried out by programs or subroutines in the first and second libraries which together comprises the interface.

The data exchange library of the communication interface allows a first process using data records or forms having a first format to communicate with a second process which has data records having a second, different format without the need for the first process to know or to be able to deal with the format used by the second process.

The data-exchange library of the communication interface includes a forms-manager module and a forms-class manager module. The forms-manager module handles the creation, storage, recall and destruction of instances of forms and calls to the various functions of the forms-class manager. The forms-class manager handles the creation, storage, recall, interpretation, and destruction of forms-class descriptors which are data records.

The communications library uses subject mapping, and receives “subscribe” requests from an application which specifies the subject upon which data is requested. A subject-mapper module then looks up the subject in a database which stores “service records” which indicate the various server processes that supply data on various subjects, and identifies an appropriate service record.

Thus Skeen et al. fails to specifically disclose workflow management applications, and it is quite evident that the prior art rejection attempts to apply Skeen et al. to the general system of workflow management applications through clear hindsight and only through the benefit of the disclosure and teachings of the present invention.

Khan et al.

Khan, et al. (U.S.P 6,157,934) is the only applied reference which relates specifically to a workflow application, and discloses a server/client architecture (one server computer = main server (cf. col. 2, line 2) and a plurality of client computers) wherein a single workflow application is processed. In contrast thereto, the present invention relates to and

provides an interface between different workflow management systems (first server computer 112 and second server computer 122), each connected to at least one client computer 111, 121, and further wherein each different workflow management system has its own workflow management system application 3, 4 with an interaction between the different workflow management systems. Khan et al. does not disclose or discuss a similar interaction between different workflow management systems.

It is quite apparent, based upon the above descriptions of Bittinger et al, Skeen et al. and Khan et al. that the prior art rejection is based wholly upon a hindsight approach of attempting to reconstruct the claimed tenets of the present invention through hindsight and with the clear benefit of the teachings of the present invention.

The line of argumentation of the Final Rejection is that given the understanding of WfMSs as given in Khan et al., it would be obvious to apply a mapping mechanism such as outlined in Skeen et al. to connect those WfMSs because this relationship between WfMSs corresponds to a connection facilitated by connector applications facilitating invocations as outlined in Bittinger et al. and employing mapping tables as described by Skeen et al.

The inventor has a number of observations regarding this line of argumentation:

1. As outlined by the Examiner, Khan et al. is used only as an example,

and does not address the issue of distributed, loosely coupled WfMSs, or any other configuration of multiple WfMSs.

2. Bittinger et al. propose an interceptor and use it for protocol conversion and in particular for caching. Interceptors are a standard architecture that can be used for many different purposes. However, this architecture is used very differently and for different ends, which are totally unrelated to workflow management. While an http get or http post message constitutes a task request in the most abstract sense, it is very different from the specific and detailed tasks assignment of a workflow management system by including-among other items-time lines and information used for managing the task execution and potentially causing multiple responses based on the management information.

3. In the FINAL REJECTION, point 2, the Examiner claims that the Bittinger et al. system uses a connection agreement to specify the interaction protocol. However, there is not mention of an agreement in claim 1 or column 3, to which the Examiner refers, or any other place in the patent. However, the agreement is an important element of the present invention described in the patent application since it is the basis of the mapping. Without an agreement defining a shared terminology, mapping to a specific terminology cannot take place.

4. In the absence of an agreement defining a shared technology, the approach of Skeen et al. cannot be applied to the problem since it is only usable in the context of well-defined formats for which adapters and mappers

can be implemented, not for ad-hoc specifications of a shared terminology, which require an explicit agreement of terminology.

5. The Final Rejection claims that a person skilled in the art could readily apply the teachings of Bittinger et al. and Skeen et al. to the single WfMS of Khan et al. However, distributed workflow management is still a very active and open field of research. Even today, many issues remain unsolved and, at the time of the present invention, as far as the inventor is aware, no known vendor has offered the proposed technology despite its obvious benefits.

The above observations clearly indicate that (1) it is non-obvious to combine the three referenced patents and, even is combined, (2) they do not provide the same features as the present invention because, among other reasons, they do not provide the features related to agreements defining a shared technology and hence at an arbitrary level of granularity.

9. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the Final Rejection is in error and should be reversed for good reasons, and it is respectfully requested that the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences so find.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the required fee in the amount of \$320.00 and any additional fees or credit any overpayment in connection herewith to Deposit Account No. 50-0510/IBM. A triplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William C. Roch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" being the most prominent part.

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APPENDIX A

Application Serial No. 09/433,427

1. (Amended) A method of interconnecting a first server computer (112) of a service requestor (1) and a second server computer (122) of a service provider (2), each of said first server computer (112) and said second server computer (122) being connected to at least one client computer (111, 121);

said first server computer (112) running a first workflow management system application (3), and said second server computer (122) running a second workflow management system application (4);

said method comprising providing a first and a second connector application (5a, 6a) for permitting said first server computer (112) access to a copy of said first connector application (5a) and for permitting said second server computer (122) access to a copy of said second connector application (6a);

wherein said copies of said first and said second connector application (5a, 6a) each comprises a connection agreement (8, 12) for a first work task (7) of a first workflow instance (18) encompassed by said first workflow management system application (3);
which copy of said first connector application (5a) further comprises a first mapping table (9) including a first service terminology (9a) and a common terminology (9b, 13b), and which

copy of said second connector application (6a) further comprises a second mapping table (13) including a second service terminology (13a) and said common terminology (9b, 13b);

said first work task (7) being transposed by said first mapping table (9) from said first service terminology (9a) into an input data set (ip1, ip2) in said common terminology (9b, 13b);

said input data set (ip1, ip2) being marshalled to said second server computer (122) over a common connection (17), and said marshalled input data set (ip1, ip2) being transposed to a second work task (15) by said second mapping table (13) from said common terminology (9b, 13b) into said second service terminology (13a), and said second work task (15) being processed by said second workflow management system application (4).

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said processed second work task (15) generates a result (wo1, wo2), said result (wo1, wo2) being transposed by said second mapping table (13) from said second service terminology (13a) into an output data set (op1, op2) in said common terminology (9b, 13b), said mapped output data set (op1, op2) being marshalled to said first server computer (112) over said common connection (17), and said marshalled output data being transposed by said first mapping table (9) from said common terminology (9b, 13b) into said first service terminology (9a).

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of said first connector application (5a) resides in a first access device (5) of said service requestor (1); said first access device (5) comprising a first access computer including said first connector application (5a).
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of said second connector application (6a) resides in a second access device (6) of said service provider (2); said second access device (6) comprising a second access computer including said second connector application (6a).
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of the first connector application (5a) resides in said first server computer (112) of said service requestor (1).
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of the second connector application (6a) resides in said second server computer (122) of said service provider (2).
7. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of said first connector application (5a) resides in said first client computer (111).
8. The method of claim 1 wherein said copy of said second connector application (6a) resides in said second client computer (121).
9. The method of claim 1 wherein said first workflow management system application (3) is essentially the same as said second workflow management system application (4).

10. A computer network comprising a first server computer (112) of a service requestor (1) and a second server computer (122) of a service provider (2), each of said first server computer (112) and said second server computer (122) being connected to at least one client computer (111, 121);

said first server computer (112) running a first workflow management system application (3), and said second server computer (122) running a second workflow management system application (4);

said first and second server computer (112, 122) being interconnected by means of a first and a second connector application (5a, 6a) arranged in such a manner that said first server computer (112) having access to a copy of said first connector application (5a) and said second server computer (122) having access to a copy of said second connector application (6a);

wherein said first and said second connector application (5a, 6a) each comprise a connection agreement (8, 12) for a first work task (7) of a first workflow instance (18) encompassed by said first workflow management system application (3);

which copy of said first connector application (5a) further comprises a first mapping table (9) including a first service terminology (9a) and a common terminology (9b, 13b), and which

copy of said second connector application (6a) further comprises a second mapping table (13) including a second service terminology (13a) and said common terminology (13b);

said first work task (7) being transposed by said first mapping table (9) from said first service terminology (9a) into an input data set (ip1, ip2) in said common terminology (9b, 13b);

said input data set (ip1, ip2) being marshalled to said second server computer (122) over a common connection (17), and said marshalled input data set (ip1, ip2) being transposed to a second work task (15) by said second mapping table (13) from said common terminology (9b, 13b) into said second service terminology (13a), and said second work task (15) being processed by said second workflow management system application (4).

11. The network of claim 10 wherein said processed second work task (15) generates a result (wo1, wo2), said result (wo1, wo2) being transposed by said second mapping table (13) from said second service terminology (13a) into an output data (op1, op2) in said common terminology (9b, 13b), said mapped output data set (op1, op2) being marshalled to said first server computer (112) over said common connection (17), and said marshalled output data being transposed by said first mapping table (9) from said common terminology (9b, 13b) into said first service terminology (2a).

12. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of said first connector application (5a) resides in a first access device (5) of said service requestor (1), which first access device (5) comprises a first access computer including said first connector application (5a).

13. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of said second connector application (6a) resides in a second access device (6) of said service provider (2), which second access device (6) comprises a second access computer including said second connector application (6a).

14. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of the first connector application (5a) resides in said first server computer (112) of said service requestor (1).

15. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of the second connector application (6a) resides in the second server computer (122) of said service provider (2).

16. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of said first connector application (5a) resides in said first client computer (111).

17. The network of claim 10 wherein said copy of said second connector application (6a) resides in said second client computer (121).

18. The network of claim 10 wherein said first workflow management system application (3) is essentially the same as said second workflow management system application (4).